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Senate

NATIONAL LABORATORIES PARTNERSHIP IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Today, the United States of America will consume some 7.8 million barrels of oil to power our cars, trucks, and vans. Between now and the year 2015, we are told by the Secretary of Energy that 7.8 million barrels of oil per day consumption for our cars, trucks, and vans will rise by some 36 percent to over 10 1/2 million barrels of oil per day. My own view is that it would be better for our country if we had no increase.

The amendment Senator Specter and I offer today is one that seeks to reduce by one-third--1 million barrels of oil per day--the amount of oil we are going to consume in 2015 to power our cars, trucks, and vans.

There are a variety of ways to achieve those savings. Earlier in this debate on the energy bill, Senator Levin and Senator Bond offered an amendment that sought to conserve oil with respect to our cars, trucks, and vans. I voted for it, as did Senator Specter. I voted for that amendment because I like a number of aspects of it. I will mention a few of those aspects.

No. 1, it has been said that we should use the Government's purchasing power to commercialize new technologies and provide tax credits to consumers to buy more fuel-efficient vehicles, and that the auto industry be given a reasonable lead time. There were a number of very positive aspects to the Levin-Bond amendment.

One thing that was missing in the Levin-Bond amendment was a measurable

objective. During the time I served as Governor of Delaware for 8 years, we worked often with measurable objectives--job creation, improving credit rating, getting people off welfare, and reducing the rate of teen pregnancies. In setting the objectives, we tried not to micromanage the process. We set a measurable objective and tried to hold ourselves accountable to that measurable objective.

Today, in offering this amendment, we set a measurable objective. We don't change the Levin-Bond amendment. It is all there in place. We don't change the amendment offered earlier by the Senator from Georgia, Mr. Miller, with respect to pickup trucks; that remains where it is.

But we say that in 2015 we want the consumption of oil for our cars, trucks, and vans consuming at that time 1 million barrels less than what it otherwise would be without this amendment.

Senator Specter, in joining me in this amendment, I thought offered a very constructive change. He suggested that in order to meet these savings, rather than just having the Secretary of Transportation issue a regulation to change the CAFE standard, why don't we ask the Secretary of Transportation to take into consideration a number of other factors, including the use of alternative forms of fuel.

The amendment, as amended by Senator Specter, does just that. The Secretary of Transportation, in issuing his regulations in the future, can require so much savings from

CAFE changes, so much savings from alternative fuels, including biodiesel, soydiesel, ethanol, even diesel fuel derived from coal waste.

I think our obligation here is to set the objective. The responsibility of the Congress and the President is to say--and we now rely for almost 60 percent of our oil from abroad. We have a \$400 billion trade deficit, and it is growing, and one-third of that is attributable to oil, which is troublesome, and the notion that we have global warming, and one-quarter of the carbon dioxide that goes up into the air which comes from cars, trucks, and vans--we have an obligation to set measurable objectives in terms of slowing growth and reserving oil.

This amendment does so in a flexible way. It says to the Secretary of Transportation very clearly: We expect you

to rely on working with the auto industry on issuing a regulation that may involve CAFE changes. We also want to make sure we rely on alternative fuels.

For a State such as Delaware, we have a heavy reliance on the raising of soybeans. We like the idea of encouraging soydiesel.

For those who come from States where there is a lot of corn, there is the notion that the Secretary of Transportation can issue regulations to encourage the consumption of ethanol to help power our cars, trucks, and vans in the future.

For those who come from States with a fair amount of coal and coal waste, there is the notion that you can use that waste product to actually create a cleaner diesel fuel that can be used for reducing our reliance on oil, and particularly foreign oil.